

And The Mountains Echoed

by **Khaled Hosseini**

January 15, 2014

This bittersweet family saga spans six decades and transports readers from Afghanistan to France, Greece, and the United States. Hosseini (The Kite Runner; A Thousand Splendid Suns) weaves a gorgeous tapestry of disparate characters joined by threads of blood and fate. Siblings Pari and Abdullah are cruelly separated at childhood. A disfigured young woman, Thalia is abandoned by her mother and learns to love herself under the tutelage of a surrogate. Markos, a doctor who travels the world healing strangers, avoids his sick mother back home. A feminist poet, Nila Wahdatire, reinvents herself through an artful magazine interview, and Nabi, who is burdened by a past deed, leaves a letter of explanation. Each character tells his or her version of the same story of selfishness and selflessness, acceptance and forgiveness, but most important, of love in all its complex iterations.

For Whom the Bell Tolls

by **Ernest Hemingway**

February 19

In 1937 Ernest Hemingway traveled to Spain to cover the civil war there for the North American Newspaper Alliance. Three years later he completed the greatest novel to emerge from "the good fight," For Whom the Bell Tolls. The story of Robert Jordan, a young American in the International Brigades attached to an antifascist guerilla unit in the mountains of Spain, it tells of loyalty and courage, love and defeat, and the tragic death of an ideal. In his portrayal of Jordan's love for the beautiful Maria and his superb account of El Sordo's last stand, in his brilliant travesty of La Pasionaria and his unwillingness to believe in blind faith, Hemingway surpasses his achievement in The Sun Also Rises & A Farewell to Arms to create a work at once rare and beautiful, strong and brutal, compassionate, moving & wise.

The First Impression

by **David Thomasson**

March 19

During a routine service call at a church, Jack Bolt runs into 13-year-old Sara Ellison. Moments after he leaves, Sarah is brutally murdered. Bolt is charged with the crime and convicted by a brilliant prosecutor who uses Jack's own honesty against him. Jack's been framed with tainted evidence, but this is no whodunit. Bolt knows exactly who did it: Conrad Baylor, church deacon and deputy chief of police. Possible author visit.

Flight Behavior

by **Barbara Kingsolver**

April 16

Dellarobia Turnbow is in a perpetual state of fight or flight. Married at 17 to kind, dull Cub, she finds even the satisfaction of motherhood small consolation for the stultifying existence on her in-laws' struggling Tennessee sheep farm. When a fluke of nature upends the monotony of her life, Dellarobia morphs into the church's poster child for a miracle, an Internet phenomenon, and a woman on the verge of unexpected opportunity as scientists, reporters, and ecotourists converge on the Turnbow property. Orange Prize winner Kingsolver (The Lacuna) performs literary magic, generously illuminating both sides of the culture wars, from the global-warming debate to public education in America. It's a joy to watch Dellarobia and her precocious son, Preston, blossom under the tutelage of entomologist Ovid Byron. Highly recommended.

The Yellow Birds

by **Kevin Powers**

May 21

This moving debut from Powers (a former Army machine gunner) is a study of combat, guilt, and friendship forged under fire. Pvt. John Bartle, 21, and Pvt. Daniel Murphy, 18, meet at Fort Dix, N.J., where Bartle is assigned to watch over Murphy. The duo is deployed to Iraq, and the novel alternates between the men's war zone experiences and Bartle's life after returning home. Early on, it emerges that Murphy has been killed; Bartle is haunted by guilt, and the details of Murphy's death surface slowly. Powers writes gripping battle scenes, and his portrait of male friendship, while cheerless, is deeply felt. As a poet, the author's prose is ambitious, which sets his treatment of the theme apart. The sparse scene where Bartle finally recounts Murphy's fate is masterful and Powers' style & story are haunting. Possible author visit.